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# VIRGINIA LAW REGISTER.

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VOL. II.]

JANUARY, 1897.

[No. 9.

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## ALEX. H. H. STUART.

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ALEX. H. H. STUART was descended, on the paternal side, from a Scotch-Irish family. His great-grandfather, Archibald Stuart, was born and reared near Londonderry, Ireland, and intermarried with Janet Brown, a sister of the Rev. John Brown, who afterwards removed to the United States, and whose descendants became conspicuous members of society.

Archibald Stuart having become connected with one of the Irish rebellions (about the close of the reign of Queen Anne or the beginning of George I), was compelled to flee for his life. After many adventures he made his escape to Pennsylvania, where he remained in concealment for seven years. An act of amnesty having then been passed, he sent for his wife and two infant children (whom he had been obliged to leave behind him), and remained in Pennsylvania until 1738, when he removed to Augusta county, Virginia, where he died in 1761.

Alexander Stuart, the second son of Archibald, was born in Pennsylvania in 1734, and came to Virginia with his parents in 1738. He was a prominent man in his day, commanded a company of Augusta volunteers at the battle of Guildford Court House, where he distinguished himself for his gallantry. Two horses were killed under him during the battle, and he was wounded so badly that he was left on the battlefield and fell into the hands of the enemy.

Archibald Stuart, the father of Alex. H. H. Stuart, was the oldest son of Alexander Stuart. He was educated at William and Mary College. In the Spring of 1781 he left college and joined his father's regiment and participated in the battle of Guildford Court House. After the war he studied law with Mr. Jefferson, and began the practice of his profession in 1782. For three years he represented Botetourt county in the House of Delegates, though he was not a resident of the county, but was then living in Rockbridge. He afterwards set-



ALEX. H. H. STUART.

tled in Staunton as a lawyer and represented the county of Augusta in the House of Delegates. In 1788 he was chosen a member of the Convention which ratified the Constitution of the United States. For several terms he was a member of the State Senate and also President of that body. In 1799 he was elected Judge of the District Court, afterwards known as the Circuit Court, of which Augusta was a part, and discharged the duties of this office for thirty years. He was the intimate friend and correspondent of Jefferson, Madison, Monroe and Marshall, and as a member of the Electoral College of Virginia voted for Washington, Jefferson, Madison, Monroe and Crawford for President of the United States.

Eleanor Briscoe, the mother of Alex. H. H. Stuart, was the daughter of Colonel Gerard Briscoe, an officer in the Revolutionary army. One of her sisters was the mother of Briscoe G. Baldwin, a judge of the Supreme Court of Appeals of Virginia, and another married Judge Hugh Holmes, of Winchester. She was a woman of fine intellectual powers and great dignity of character; kept abreast of the times in literature, and associated with the most distinguished statesmen and patriots of the day.

Alexander Hugh Holmes Stuart, the youngest son of Archibald Stuart and Eleanor Briscoe his wife, was born in Staunton, Va., April 2, 1807, and was named for his paternal grandfather and Judge Hugh Holmes, his father's brother-in-law and devoted friend. In early childhood he was of delicate constitution and was always of a nervous, high-strung nature, and possessed of a dominant will and restless energy, which was undaunted by difficulties. He was fond of books, and, with a fine library to draw upon, soon became a diligent reader. After attending the primary schools in Staunton he was sent to William and Mary College, and, on returning home from college, read law one year under the direction of his father and spent one year at the University of Virginia, pursuing his legal studies under Professor John Tayloe Lomax. On the 19th day of August, 1828, Mr. Stuart procured his license and at once began the practice of the law.

The Bar of Staunton then numbered among its members some of the most learned and distinguished lawyers of the day. Surrounded by such legal talent, it was no easy task for a youth to gain distinction there. This environment, however, fired the ambition of young Stuart and he applied himself assiduously to his profession. Nature had highly favored him; he was six feet four inches in height, with brilliant dark eyes, and hair as dark as the raven's wing; add to this a

full, rich and melodious voice, a fund of exuberant spirit and sparkling humor, ambition and determination to succeed, and we can understand the circumstances under which Mr. Stuart began his career.

In those days the lawyers of this section did not confine their practice to the local Bar, as is now the case, but attended regularly the courts of the adjoining counties. These trips were usually made on horseback or in gigs. In accordance with this practice, Mr. Stuart, at once, began to attend the monthly courts of Rockbridge, at Lexington, a distance of thirty-six miles, and of Bath county, at the Warm Springs, sixty miles, and I have heard him say that for many years he rarely missed one of the terms of those courts.

Judge Stuart passed away on July 11, 1832. He lived long enough to see his son established in his profession, and to instill into his mind an ardent love of country, which we shall see, as this sketch proceeds, was one of the most marked characteristics of his life. Judge Stuart owned large landed properties in various parts of the State at the date of his death. On the day before he died, he conversed freely with his son, acquainted him with the condition of his business affairs, and committed his mother to his care. Mrs. Stuart attained a ripe old age and died in 1858 from the effects of an injury sustained by a fall.

Mr. Stuart admired and revered his father and mother in no ordinary degree, and always spoke of them to the day of his death in terms of the greatest admiration and affection. The intercourse between the mother and son was marked by mutual consideration and love during the twenty-six years that she survived her husband.

On August 1, 1833, Mr. Stuart married Frances Cornelia Baldwin, daughter of Briscoe G. Baldwin. She was for more than fifty years (to use his own words), "the light, joy and inspiration" of his life. To them were born eleven children, four sons and seven daughters. Mr. Stuart was a very domestic man, and amid all his successes his heart ever turned fondly to his own hearthstone. With the exception of a four-year-old daughter and two infants, these children all reached maturity, then death came, again and again, into this devoted household and carried off one child after another until only three daughters were left. Two grown daughters, beautiful in character and life, and three promising sons, just entering upon the threshold of manhood, preceded him to the grave and left his name extinct.

Returning now to Mr. Stuart as a lawyer. We saw, when last on this subject, that he was actively engaged in the practice of his profession. He rapidly developed into an able advocate. His services

were in demand, not only at home, but also in the adjoining counties, and for many years he had a large practice in the Court of Appeals at Lewisburg. Mr. Stuart was not in active practice when I first knew him, and I shall, therefore, let others, who knew him well, describe him as a lawyer.

Hon. Jos. A. Waddell, the accomplished Clerk of the Court of Appeals at Staunton, who was himself educated as a lawyer, knew Mr. Stuart intimately when he was in full practice. In an article written after Mr. Stuart's death he said: "He soon acquired distinction as an advocate. As a speaker, he was fluent, clear and persuasive; and his manner of stating a case almost precluded argument."

Maj. T. C. Elder, a lawyer of deep learning, prepared a tribute for the Staunton Bar on the occasion of Mr. Stuart's death, in which he describes him in the following language: "Mr. Stuart's learning as a lawyer was deep and comprehensive. He relied more upon general principles than adjudicated cases. For the minor technicalities of the law his mind had but little affinity, and he made no effectation of special learning as to them. Such was the scope and character of his mind that he sought, when these technicalities were in his way, to avoid their effects by an overwhelming presentation of his case on its merits, rather than by an array of counter technicalities.

"A sound and discriminating judgment, united with natural aptitude for business affairs, an equable temperament, and a keen sagacity, made him a safe adviser and a prudent counsellor.

"As an advocate he was unsurpassed, if equalled, by any of his contemporaries. His voice was strong, clear, and flexible; his manner was graceful and courtly; his vocabulary extensive and at ready command; his fancy lively; his taste almost perfect.

"When in the prime of manhood it was difficult for a jury to resist his eloquence."

Thos. F. Goode, Esq., in a letter to Maj. Elder about this time, wrote: "I would say without hesitation that he was the most accomplished, attractive and effective advocate that I ever heard."

Gen. John Echols, whose recent death deprived Virginia of one of her noblest sons, for he had served her well both in peace and in war, on Dec. 15, 1894, wrote to the author of this article as follows: "I knew him" (Mr. Stuart) "well, from the time of my boyhood up to the period of his death, and I remember the deep impression that he made upon me, in my early manhood, as the most accomplished advocate whom I had ever heard, and now, in looking back, I can remem-

ber no man at the Bar who was his superior in all the elements of the accomplished advocate. I have now in my mind two speeches, which I heard him make in two celebrated cases tried in the Circuit Court or Rockbridge county, which I have never heard surpassed for persuasive and powerful invective, and genuine eloquence, which carried everything before him. He was, according to my mind, also the most captivating writer upon political subjects whom we have had in Virginia within the last fifty years. No doubt many of his old friends now remember a series of political articles which he wrote, during a Presidential canvass, some forty or fifty years ago, called "The Fair Proposition," which had a widespread circulation, and made a most marked impression upon public sentiment. Indeed, in looking back over the life of our honored and lamented friend, we might well use the declaration made by the great Samuel Johnson in speaking of his dead friend, Goldsmith: '*Nullum tetigit quod non ornavit.*'

"Mr. Stuart was a great man upon whatever theatre he was called to act—at the Bar, in the halls of legislation, in the Cabinet, on the hustings, as an adviser of his fellow-men—everywhere he was great."

As the lawyers of forty or fifty years ago travelled from court to court on horseback or in gigs, stopping at country taverns, they had many amusing experiences, as our older brethren can testify. Mr. Stuart used to tell of a trip he made to Bath county with Thos. J. Michie, Esq., with whom he was at one time in partnership. Mr. Michie was a splendid lawyer, but not much of a driver, and he rarely made one of these trips that some accident did not happen either to his vehicle or harness. On the occasion in question, when they were about to start, Mr. Stuart said he felt quite sure that Mr. Michie would have his usual bad luck before he got back home, and he concluded he would have a little fun with him; so he walked into one of the stores and called for a hammer, a few nails and some strong strings; the cost was a mere trifle, and he told the merchant to charge them to Mr. Michie, who had already set out in good order for Bath. When he had travelled for some hours and gotten deep into the mountains, and was, doubtless, thinking more of the cases he was to argue in court, than where he was driving, his gig was suddenly upset, Mr. Michie was thrown out, one of the shafts was broken and also the harness. Soon after the accident occurred, Mr. Stuart drove up, and at a glance took in the situation. When he saw that Mr. Michie had sustained no personal injury, he could not resist a hearty laugh, in which Mr. Michie joined despite his unhappy situation. The latter,

however, did not think it altogether a joke, for he was out in the mountains, far from human assistance, and was at his wit's end to know how to mend matters. If he only had a hammer and a few nails he could mend his shaft, and a strong string would be all that was necessary to repair the breach in the harness. "Well," said Mr. Stuart, "haven't you got them?" "No," said Mr. Michie, "I have nothing, and here in the mountains, remote from any human habitation, I do not see what I am to do." Mr. Stuart went to his gig, produced the very things Mr. Michie so much desired, told him the circumstances under which he had purchased them, and that, when he got home, he could call at the store and pay for them. Mr. Michie was greatly relieved to get them, and, with a hearty laugh, exclaimed, "Well, Stuart, you are certainly the most thoughtful man I ever knew; I will settle the bill!" By their joint efforts the gig and harness were soon repaired, and for the next few miles Mr. Michie drove very carefully.

Mr. Stuart and another member of the Staunton Bar, whose name, however, I am sorry I do not recollect, were employed to defend a man in one of the western counties, when the county courts were presided over by the Justices. The prominence of the party accused had attracted a good deal of attention in the community and drawn a large crowd of people in attendance on the court. On the day fixed for the trial, the court, lawyers and accused were all on hand. After examining the indictment carefully, Mr. Stuart and his associate were satisfied that it could not be sustained, and would have to be dismissed. Accordingly, when the court convened, they submitted a motion to dismiss the indictment upon a simple statement of the grounds relied upon, to which the Commonwealth's attorney replied briefly, and the court, after conferring, announced it as their judgment that the indictment would be dismissed, but added, that a large number of the people from the country had come to court to hear "the foreign lawyers," and the court was, therefore, of the opinion that they had better argue the case! We can well imagine that the argument was addressed more to flashes of wit and flights of fancy than to the merits (?) of the case.

On another occasion, Mr. Stuart was defending a young man in the United States District Court, which then sat in Staunton. The case made out against his client was a very weak one, but the district attorney magnified every circumstance of the most trivial nature, as though they were "confirmations strong as proofs of holy writ." Mr.



Stuart requested some one who was sitting next to him to go out and bring the *Pickwick Papers*, and he read the celebrated speech of Sergeant Buzfuz, to the intense amusement of court, jury and bystanders. The district attorney was badly discomfited and the jury promptly rendered a verdict of "not guilty."

While Mr. Stuart was an accomplished lawyer, he was a born statesman, and there is no doubt but that he preferred politics—in the broadest and best sense—to law, but whatever preferment came to him had to come unsought. H. C. Tinsley, a veteran editor and sagacious observer of public men, said of Mr. Stuart: "He knew his own value as a leader as accurately as any man we ever knew in political life, and while all he was and all he had gained by experience or study was at the service of the people, he did not ask them to take it. For he was a lofty man both in mental and physical stature, and stooped to nothing." He had been reared among a generation of men that had taken an active part in the war of Independence, and in the establishment of our systems of governments, State and Federal. From them he imbibed a deep love of country, and he took a pride in everything that tended to increase her honor and glory. It is not strange, therefore, that we should find him at an early age actively engaged in the political contest of the day. In political faith he was a Whig, and, in 1832, as an advocate of the cause of Henry Clay for the Presidency, he was sent as a delegate to the Young Men's National Convention, which assembled in Washington city in May of that year, where he listened to the impassioned eloquence of that great man, and was ever afterwards one of his most ardent admirers and warmest advocates.

In 1836 Mr. Stuart was elected to the House of Delegates and served for three consecutive terms. There were no railroads in those days, and he gives the following account of his journey to Richmond: "I left my house in Staunton, in the stage, at two o'clock in the morning, and, after a laborious day's travel, walking up the mountain at Rockfish Gap, and, after we got into the red lands of Albemarle, occasionally assisting in prizing the coach out of the mud with fence rails, we arrived at Charlottesville after night. The second day we left Charlottesville at two o'clock in the morning, and, after a laborious journey of fifteen hours, arrived at Wilmington, in Fluvanna. The third day we left Wilmington at twelve o'clock at night and arrived at Richmond an hour or two after dark. According to my best recollection, the stage fare was eleven or twelve dollars, and the cost

of eight meals and two nights' lodgings, at fifty cents each, was five dollars, making the aggregate cost of the trip sixteen or seventeen dollars! Now we go from Staunton to Richmond, in a comfortable car, in less than five hours, at a cost of four dollars and twenty cents, and yet there are people who think the chief object of railroads is to rob the public!"

It is no wonder that the subject of internal improvements was then beginning to engage the attention of the public, and that Mr. Stuart was an earnest advocate of them. He labored for relief in this direction during the session of 1836-7 and 1837-8, and although unsuccessful he was not disheartened by defeat, for the subject was being discussed and pressed to the front. In the session of 1838-9, as a member of a special committee on the subject, he prepared a report on behalf of the committee, in which he indicated almost all of the great lines of improvements which have since been constructed. The report was defeated by a small majority, but the subject was ably debated and gained many friends. Still persisting, Mr. Stuart brought forward, and succeeded in having passed, as separate measures, the Valley MacAdamized road from Winchester to Abingdon, and the Staunton and Parkersburg road across the mountains to the Ohio river, and at the same session the Institution for the Deaf and Dumb and the Blind was established at Staunton. At the close of this session Mr. Stuart declined re-election, and, though not in the public service, took a deep interest in all that concerned the public, was a frequent contributor to the Whig press, and entered actively upon the presidential canvass of 1840, which resulted in the election of Harrison and Tyler.

Mr. Stuart was nominated as the Whig candidate for a seat in the Twenty-seventh Congress in 1841; his competitor was James McDowell, of Rockbridge, afterwards Governor of Virginia. Their families had been intimate for several generations; McDowell's grandfather had been Colonel, and Mr. Stuart's grandfather had been Major, of the Guildford regiment that went from the Valley in the Revolutionary war. Mr. McDowell was absent in Mississippi when Mr. Stuart received the nomination, and he waited a month for his return before beginning the canvass, though the district was a large one, one hundred and sixty miles long. The canvass was conducted on a high plane of courtesy, lasted for six weeks, and at its close the candidates were better friends than they were at the beginning.

Mr. Stuart took his seat in the extra session of Congress May 31, 1841, and was active in the memorable contest for the organization of

the House; delivered carefully prepared speeches on a number of the most important questions of the day, and was one of the four members from the South who voted to rescind the twenty-first rule, by virtue of which all petitions on the subject of slavery were laid on the table instead of being read or referred to an appropriate committee. He believed that the people had the right to petition Congress on any subject, and hence did not hesitate to vote for rescission, although he knew full well that his vote would subject him to adverse criticism. At the close of the Twenty-seventh Congress he resumed the practice of his profession with diligence and success, although he engaged in the popular discussions of the issues involved in the presidential elections of 1844 and 1848.

In September, 1850, Mr. Stuart received, by the hands of a private messenger, a letter from Mr. Webster, then Secretary of State, notifying him that the President desired to nominate him to the Senate for the office of Secretary of the Department of the Interior, and desiring to know his wishes and inclinations on the subject. As this was the first intimation he had received that there was a purpose to tender him the position, it was necessary that he should give the subject mature consideration. This he did, and with much hesitation and a heavy sacrifice of his pecuniary interests, he accepted the office, which he held until the close of Mr. Fillmore's administration in March, 1853. The duty of organizing the department fell chiefly upon Mr. Stuart, for it had been recently organized, and Mr. Ewing, his predecessor, had only held the office for a short time. Mr. Stuart discharged the duties of his office in a highly satisfactory manner, and when he retired the department was in a high state of efficiency.

Soon after returning home he was tendered the nomination for the State Senate, but declined and devoted himself to his profession. In 1857 he was nominated for the same position, and although he declined at first, yet he was appealed to in such a manner by his friends and old constituents that he yielded his objections and stood for election; took his seat in December, 1857, and continued to serve for several terms. During his service in the Senate the sectional disturbances began to overspread the political horizon and culminated in the invasion of Virginia by John Brown and his fanatics at Harper's Ferry. The Democrats were in control of the State Government. Gov. Wise sent a special message to the legislature on the subject, which, on the motion of a Democratic Senator, was referred to a select committee, of which the Senator from Augusta was to be chairman. Mr. Stuart

prepared and presented to the Senate, on behalf of this committee, an exhaustive report covering the whole subject of slavery; its origin and growth both in the North and in the South, showing that while the North had sold their slaves, for economical reasons, to the South, yet many of them (there were some honorable exceptions) defiantly disregarded the fugitive slave laws of the United States; that the John Brown raid was the logical result of such conduct, and concluded by recommending vigorous action to prevent the repetition of such outrages in the future. The report was adopted and produced a deep impression upon the people of the State.

While serving in the Senate Mr. Stuart was elected a member of the State Convention, which met in Richmond February 13, 1861; he was a Union man, and strongly opposed to secession. On April 8, 1861, Wm. Ballard Preston, George W. Randolph and himself were appointed a committee, by the Convention, to wait on the President of the United States "and respectfully ask of him to communicate to this Convention the policy which the Federal Executive intends to pursue in regard to the Confederate States." Mr. Stuart, on his return from Washington, delivered a speech before the Convention in which he predicted the disaster and ruin that would befall Virginia, in case she seceded, and pleaded for delay until the result of a convention of the border States, which was to be held in Kentucky on May 27, 1861, could be ascertained. Lincoln's call for seventy-five thousand troops to subjugate the Confederate States so inflamed the public mind, however, that the ordinance of secession was passed.

During the war Mr. Stuart remained in private life, but his sympathies were with his own people and his son (a mere boy) was in military service. He was offered an important foreign mission in 1864, which he declined.

When Generals Lee and Johnston surrendered their armies, and Governor Smith, with the other officers of the State, abandoned the seat of government at Richmond, Mr. Stuart recognized that the war was at an end. There was no government, State or Federal; the country was full of lawlessness, and, to use his own language, "a condition of things had arisen in which, if the people wished their voice to be heard, they must speak for themselves." Recognizing this condition, he was instrumental in calling a mass meeting of the people of Augusta county to assemble and decide what was the best course to pursue. This meeting was held on the 8th day of May, 1865, was largely attended by the representative people of the county, and was

presided over by Mr. Stuart. Resolutions were adopted declaring that opposition to the authority of the United States was at an end in the county; recognizing the necessity for the reorganization of the government of Virginia so as to conform to the Constitution and laws of the United States; recommending a State Convention as the best mode of effecting the object proposed, and the appointment of a committee to visit Richmond and ascertain whether the military authorities of the United States would interpose any obstruction to such action on the part of the people, and also to confer with similar committees from other counties. The committee visited Richmond and were courteously received, but were informed that Peirpont had been installed as Governor under military authority.

This is an important event, because it was the first organized movement for peace and the restoration of Virginia to the Federal Union, and might have been successful but for the unfortunate assassination of Lincoln and the bitter feelings engendered thereby, in consequence of which it was impossible to make any farther movement for restoration at that time.

In 1865, Governor Peirpont, under sanction of President Johnson, caused elections to be held for members of the General Assembly and of the House of Representatives of the United States. Mr. Stuart was elected to represent his district, but he and his colleagues were not allowed to take their seats.

Events rapidly succeeded each other, and in the meanwhile Virginia, by some legerdemain, had actually gotten out of the Union and been transformed into "Military District No. 1."

A State Convention was held in Richmond in 1867 to frame a new Constitution for the State. Such restrictions were placed upon the eligibility of its members that the larger number of educated and intelligent men were excluded from the possibility of participating in its deliberations. There were a few young men, "to the manner born," among its number, but the large majority were "scalawags," "carpet-baggers" and ignorant negroes. The result of the labors of this body was a "monstrous document," as Mr. Stuart aptly called it. "It was," said he, "the formation and recommendation of a Constitution at war with every principle of civil liberty, bristling with test oaths and disfranchisements and other enormities, and containing provisions artfully and insidiously worded, so as not only to throw the whole political power of the State into the hands of the most ignorant class of her people, but to render practicable the virtual confiscation, by the

agency of corrupt judges and ignorant and prejudiced and interested juries, of the estates of every one who had ever been a slaveholder. Under this Constitution it was provided that no man who could not take the Congressional test oath could be allowed *to vote* at any public election, or *be allowed to serve on any jury!*"

The Act of Congress which allowed the Convention to be held provided that the Constitution should be submitted to Congress for its approval before it could be submitted to the people for ratification or rejection. The great difficulty was that there was no one authorized to represent the people, to speak for them and to point out its enormities, and to get Congress to modify or reject it. In this crisis, when the liberties of the people were trembling in the balance, and no one seemed prepared to raise a hand or enter a protest, Mr. Stuart came to the front and sounded the alarm. The Constitution had been approved by the House of Representatives and only awaited the approval of the Senate. He wrote an article signed "Senex," which, after a good deal of hesitation on the part of the publishers, was published in the Richmond papers and inaugurated what was known as "the New Movement" or "the Committee of Nine." As chairman of that committee, and in connection with his associates, he appeared before the Judiciary Committee of the Senate and pointed out the objectionable features of the proposed Constitution; wrote to prominent Republicans in Congress and elsewhere, including Horace Greely, and secured their friendly assistance. Many persons were opposed to the movement, others, while doing nothing themselves to better the condition of affairs, damned it with faint praise. Mr. Stuart knew no wavering, from its inception to its end; he spared no labor in its behalf.

The result is well known: the people were allowed to vote separately on the "test oath" and "disfranchisement" clauses, which were voted out, the rest of the Constitution was adopted, Virginia was restored to the Union and her government to her own people.

Gen. Matt Ranson, in speaking about this time to W. E. Cameron of the happy deliverance of Virginia from military rule, said: "You Virginians are the smartest people on God's green earth. You have got over your trouble, while the rest of us are just beginning to realize ours."

Mr. Stuart wrote an account of this "movement," which was published by the Virginia Historical Society in pamphlet form, and is a valuable contribution to the history of that period. No man in Virginia was better acquainted with what Mr. Stuart did for the inaugu-

ration and final success of this movement than the late John B. Minor, the greatest law teacher of this century. After Mr. Stuart's death, in a letter to Maj. Elder, he said: "His conduct as one of the famous Committee of Nine will rank him as a true statesman, keen to discern the action which the crisis required, and brave to follow it out through all obstacles, and despite the adverse sentiments of many of his countrymen. In contemplating conduct so wise and so fearless, one is strongly reminded of Horace's heroic ode,

*'Justum et tenacem propositi virum,' &c."*

H. C. Tinsley, in an editorial in the *Staunton Vindicator*, a few days after Mr. Stuart's death, in discussing this subject, said: "No bolder political enterprise, none more in the shape of a forlorn hope, was ever devised and carried out than his conception and conduct of the Committee of Nine. He confronted and bore the ridicule of the thoughtless, the suspicion of the ignorant, and the enmity of the reactionary element of his own people with a courage, a patience, and an utter self-abnegation that has hardly a parallel. Beneficent as were its results to the people of the State, it was unpopular from the beginning, and the last thing a man with the least trace of demagoguery in him would have undertaken. It was a work done solely for the people of Virginia. There was little for him in its success, if it succeeded, for he was then past three score years, and there was all the glory of his past to lose if it failed. . . . Looked at from all sides, it was the greatest work of Mr. Stuart's life, both from a State and National point of view, and it should be recorded in larger letters on his monument than any other public act of his life."

Hon. Jos. A. Waddell, in an article written some years ago, makes the following interesting statement on this subject: "For a time he submitted to misunderstanding, and even censure, on the part of some whose approval he valued. But perhaps the final sentiment of the people of Virginia was expressed by a gentleman widely known and of high standing in the State: 'In former times,' said he, 'Mr. Stuart was a leading Whig, and I, a zealous Democrat, entertained a strong prejudice against him; but his course since the war has disarmed me and won my admiration. He was known, far and wide, as a Union man who never became entirely reconciled to secession, and he might have obtained favor and position from the dominant party, if he had sought them. He, however, asked nothing for himself; he determined to share the lot of his people, and proved himself to be an unselfish patriot.'"

In 1873 Mr. Stuart was once more elected to the House of Delegates and served until 1877, when he issued a farewell address to his constituents and retired finally to private life.

For a number of years before his death he retired from the Bar, but he still retained his law office, which he had built himself and where he had practised law for nearly fifty years. There he met his friends, attended to his own private affairs, and kept alive his interest in the outside world.

But the crowning sorrow of his life was to fall upon him now, for on November 16, 1886, when he was more than seventy-nine years old, the beautiful wife of his youth was taken from him. For more than fifty years they had travelled the journey of life together; now as he had almost reached the end he was left alone.

Despite his extreme age, Mr. Stuart's mental powers were unimpaired and his sight was as good as it had been for the past twenty years, and he found an unfailing resource in books, papers and magazines. He was, perhaps, as great a reader now as he had ever been in his life. I remember, only a short time prior to his death, with what pleasure he reread Irving's *Life of Washington* and Middleton's *Cicero*, and when his last sickness came upon him he was writing a sketch of his father for the Virginia Historical Society, which he had almost completed, and which was published as he left it.

But his life's work was done, and, on February 13, 1891, he passed away, in the house in which he had been born nearly eighty-four years before.

He was a man of unsullied character and brilliant reputation—a VIRGINIAN worthy to be honored by all who love Virginia.

ALEX. F. ROBERTSON.

*Staunton, Va.*